



HE WHO BEGAN  
A GOOD WORK  
**IN YOU**  
WILL CARRY IT ON  
TO COMPLETION  
UNTIL THE DAY  
OF CHRIST JESUS.

PHILIPPIANS 1:6, NIV

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## Western Koshkonong Ev. Lutheran Church

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Eugene Kock, Vacancy Pastor

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**WELCOME**

Welcome to all in the name of the Triune God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit! If you are a guest today, we welcome you and invite you to worship with us again. Please sign our guest register.

**ORDER OF WORSHIP**

## OPENING PRAYER

P: O Lord, our Maker, Redeemer, and Comforter, we are assembled in Your presence to hear Your holy Word. We pray You to open our hearts by Your Holy Spirit, that through the preaching of Your Word we may be taught to repent of our sins, to believe on Jesus in life and death, and to grow day by day in grace and holiness. Hear us for Christ's sake. Amen.

## HYMN 543

*Rejoice, Rejoice, Believers*

## CONFESSION OF SIN

P: Beloved in the Lord: let us draw near with a true heart and confess our sins to God our Father, asking him in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to grant us forgiveness.

**C: Holy and merciful Father, I confess that I am by nature sinful and that I have disobeyed you in my thoughts, words, and actions. I have done what is evil and failed to do what is good. For this I deserve your punishment both now and in eternity. But I am truly sorry for my sins, and trusting in my Savior Jesus Christ, I pray: Lord, have mercy on me, a sinner.**

THE KYRIE ELEISON (*Lord, have mercy*)

C: [sing, p. 42] **O God the Father in heaven, have mercy upon us.  
O God the Son, Redeemer of the world, have mercy upon us.  
O God the Holy Ghost, true Comforter, have mercy upon us.**

## THE ABSOLUTION

P: Upon this your confession, I, by virtue of my office, as a called and ordained

servant of the Word, announce the grace of God unto all of you, and in the stead and by the command of my Lord Jesus Christ I forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the † Son and of the Holy Spirit.

THE GLORIA IN EXCELSIS DEO (*Glory to God in the Highest*)

P: Glory be to God in the highest.

C: [sing p. 44] **And on earth peace, good will toward men.**

**All glory be to God on high Who hath our race befriended!**

**To us no harm shall now come nigh, The strife at last is ended;**

**God showeth His good will to men, And peace shall dwell on earth again;**

**O thank Him for His Goodness!**

THE SALUTATION

P: The Lord be with you.

C: [sing, p. 45] **And with your spirit.**

THE COLLECT (*Prayer of the Day*)

C: **Lord God, heavenly Father, we pray that You would so rule and govern our hearts by Your Holy Spirit that we may seek no other refuge than the promises in Your Word, and thus avoid the sin to which we are inclined by nature. May we always be found among the faithful followers of Your Son, Jesus Christ, and by faith in Him obtain eternal salvation; through Your Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one true God, now and forever.**

C: [sing, p. 45] **Amen.**

READINGS

Christian Worship 3-Year Series — Year A

*The Old Testament — Isaiah 35:1-10*

The desert and the parched land will be glad;

the wilderness will rejoice and blossom.

Like the crocus, it will burst into bloom;

it will rejoice greatly and shout for joy.

The glory of Lebanon will be given to it,

the splendor of Carmel and Sharon;

they will see the glory of the LORD,

the splendor of our God.

Strengthen the feeble hands,

steady the knees that give way;  
say to those with fearful hearts,  
    "Be strong, do not fear;  
your God will come,  
    he will come with vengeance;  
with divine retribution  
    he will come to save you."

Then will the eyes of the blind be opened  
and the ears of the deaf unstopped.

Then will the lame leap like a deer,  
and the mute tongue shout for joy.

Water will gush forth in the wilderness  
and streams in the desert.

The burning sand will become a pool,  
the thirsty ground bubbling springs.

In the haunts where jackals once lay,  
grass and reeds and papyrus will grow.

And a highway will be there;  
it will be called the Way of Holiness;  
it will be for those who walk on that Way.

The unclean will not journey on it;  
wicked fools will not go about on it.

No lion will be there,  
nor any ravenous beast;  
they will not be found there.

But only the redeemed will walk there,  
and those the LORD has rescued will return.

They will enter Zion with singing;  
everlasting joy will crown their heads.

Gladness and joy will overtake them,  
and sorrow and sighing will flee away.

### *The Epistle — James 5:7-11*

Be patient, then, brothers and sisters, until the Lord's coming. See how the farmer waits for the land to yield its valuable crop, patiently waiting for the autumn and spring rains. You too, be patient and stand firm, because the Lord's coming is near. Don't grumble against one another, brothers and sisters, or you will be judged. The Judge is standing at the door!

Brothers and sisters, as an example of patience in the face of suffering, take the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord. As you know, we count as blessed those who have persevered. You have heard of Job's perseverance and have seen what the Lord finally brought about. The Lord is full of compassion and mercy.

*The Holy Gospel – Matthew 11:2-11*

When John, who was in prison, heard about the deeds of the Messiah, he sent his disciples to ask him, "Are you the one who is to come, or should we expect someone else?"

Jesus replied, "Go back and report to John what you hear and see: The blind receive sight, the lame walk, those who have leprosy are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the good news is proclaimed to the poor. Blessed is anyone who does not stumble on account of me."

As John's disciples were leaving, Jesus began to speak to the crowd about John: "What did you go out into the wilderness to see? A reed swayed by the wind? If not, what did you go out to see? A man dressed in fine clothes? No, those who wear fine clothes are in kings' palaces. Then what did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I tell you, and more than a prophet. This is the one about whom it is written:

"I will send my messenger ahead of you,  
who will prepare your way before you."

Truly I tell you, among those born of women there has not risen anyone greater than John the Baptist; yet whoever is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he.

RESPONSE

P: Here end the Scripture readings.

C: [sing, p. 46] **God be prais-éd for His glad tidings.**

THE CREED

P: Having heard God's Word, we confess our Christian faith using the words of the Apostles Creed.

C: **I believe in God, the Father Almighty,  
Maker of heaven and earth.  
And in Jesus Christ,  
His only Son, our Lord,**

who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,  
born of the virgin Mary  
suffered under Pontius Pilate,  
was crucified,  
died and was buried.

He descended into hell;  
The third day he rose again from the dead;  
He ascended into heaven  
and is seated at the right hand of God the Father Almighty;  
From there he shall come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit,  
the holy Christian Church,  
the communion of saints,  
the forgiveness of sins,  
the resurrection of the body,  
and the life everlasting.

C: [sing, p. 46} Amen.

HYMN 89

*Jesus Came, the Heavens Adoring*

THE SERMON

Philippians 1:3-11

*So...What Are You Praying About This Christmas Season?*

HYMN VERSE

C: [sing] Create in me a clean heart, O God,  
and renew a right spirit within me.  
Cast me not away from Your presence,  
and take not Your Holy Spirit from me.  
Restore unto me the joy of Your salvation,  
and uphold me with Your free Spirit. Amen.

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH

LORD'S PRAYER

C: Our Father, who art in heaven, Hallowed be Thy name, Thy kingdom  
come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day  
our daily bread; And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who  
trespass against us; And lead us not into temptation, But deliver us from  
evil. For Thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever and  
ever. Amen.

## THE APOSTOLIC BENEDICTION

P: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all. Amen.

## OFFERING

### HYMN VERSE

C: [sing] **We give Thee but Thine own, Whate'ré the gift may be;  
All that we have is Thine alone, A trust, O Lord, from Thee.**

### HYMN 87

*Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus*

## THE COLLECT

P: Lord God, our heavenly Father, we thank You, that of Your great mercy You have given us Your holy and blessed Word, by which You gather Your people into Your Christian Church. We humbly ask, grant us Your Holy Spirit, that we receive Your Word with thankful hearts, and live according to it, and ever increase in Christian faith, and hope, and love, and finally obtain eternal salvation; through Jesus Christ, Your beloved Son, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one true God, now and forever.

C: [sing p. 58] **Amen.**

## THE BENEDICTION

P: The LORD bless you and keep you. The LORD make His face shine on you and be gracious to you. The LORD look on you with favor and give you His peace.

C: [sing p. 59] **Amen, amen, amen.**

### HYMN 420

*Blest Be the Tie That Binds*

## CLOSING PRAYER

P: O Lord, we render unto You our heartfelt thanks that You have taught us what You would have us believe and do. Help us, O God, by Your Holy Spirit, for the sake of Jesus Christ, to keep Your Word in pure hearts, that we thereby may be strengthened in faith, perfected in holiness, and comforted in life and death. Amen.

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Organist: Darek Hartwig

# ANNOUNCEMENTS



Karlyn Sickles  
Darek Hartwig

## LAST WEEK

Last Sunday 43 people, out of love for Jesus , offered \$1,371 of which \$50 was for Missions, and \$50 was in memory of Paul Peterson. 29 people attended the Advent Service.

## ADVENT WREATH

The 3rd candle to be lighted on the Advent Wreath is called the Shepherd Candle. It is a reminder of the shepherds at the first Christmas...they listened, they believed, they worshiped, they shared.

## BIBLE CLASS

There will be no Bible Class today so that everyone can get home and be back for the Installation Service. The next Bible Class will held on Sunday Dec. 29th.

## INSTALLATION

The Installation Service for Pastor Trent Saari, who will be the next pastor of this congregation, will take place this afternoon at 3:00 p.m. Obviously, you don't want to miss this special event in the history of this congregation. It is assumed that there will be a goodly number of guests present. Following the Service, a meal will be served in the basement where all can meet and greet Pastor Saari and his wife Adrienne and daughter Hannah. May our God richly bless the ministry of Pastor Saari!!!

## MID-WEEK ADVENT SERVICES

The 3rd and final mid-week Advent Service will be held this Wednesday at 7:00 p.m. The Service will be preceded by a meal starting at 6:00 p.m. You are encouraged to attend.

## CHRISTMAS

We will celebrate the birth of our Savior with two Special Services. Our Christmas Eve Service will be at 5:30 p.m. and the Christmas Day Service at 9:30 a.m. Do make plans to attend both of these Services.



You are encouraged to keep the following members of our congregation in your prayers...members who are confined to nursing homes, sick or something other: Boyd Daley, Lois Pieper, Judy Zemke, Betty Gulseth, Inez Hougan, Norman & Eloise Thede, and Al Kroll. If you know of others who might be added to this list, please inform Pastor Saari.

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## JUST A THOUGHT

"Good Works Are the Fruit, Not the Root, Of Our Salvation"